

Serial No. 10/036,599
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Reply to the Office Action dated July 14, 2004
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AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

Claim 12 (currently amended): A method of manufacturing a piezoelectric component, comprising the steps of:

forming an unhardened first elastic material partially on at least a pair of end portions of a piezoelectric element, the pair of end portions including an edge portions of the piezoelectric element;

hardening the first elastic material;

forming an unhardened second elastic material on ~~the~~ an entire circumference of the piezoelectric element and the first elastic material;

hardening the second elastic material; and

forming an unhardened outer-cladding resin on the entire circumference of the second elastic material covering the piezoelectric element and the first elastic material; and

hardening the outer-cladding resin.

Claim 13 (currently amended): The method according to Claim 12, wherein ~~the~~ a thixotropic index of the unhardened first elastic material is larger than that of the unhardened second elastic material.

Claim 14 (currently amended): The method according to Claim 12, wherein the thixotropic indexes of the unhardened first elastic material and the unhardened second elastic material are respectively larger than about 1.7.

Claim 15 (currently amended): The method according to Claim 13, wherein ~~the~~ thixotropic indexes of the unhardened first elastic material and the unhardened second elastic material are respectively larger than about 1.7.

Claim 16 (original): The method according to Claim 12, wherein at least one of the first elastic material and the second elastic material is silicone rubber.

Claim 17 (original): The method according to Claim 12, wherein the step of forming the first elastic material is performed by one of dropping the first elastic material by one of an iron and a dispenser and dipping the edge portion of the piezoelectric element into the first elastic material in a fluid state.

Claim 18 (original): The method according to Claim 12, wherein the step of forming the second elastic material is performed by dipping the piezoelectric element into the second elastic material in a fluid state.

Claim 19 (original): The method according to Claim 12, wherein the step of forming the outer-cladding resin is performed by dipping the piezoelectric element into the outer-cladding resin in a fluid state.

Claim 20 (currently amended): The method according to Claim 12, wherein the total thickness of first and second ~~layers~~ elastic materials at the edge portions of the piezoelectric element is larger than ~~the~~ a difference between the maximum contraction amount of the outer-cladding resin and ~~the~~ a maximum contraction amount of the piezoelectric element.